

The

Tri-State Marine

From enlistment to graduation

RS Louisville, KY

Serving the future Marines of Kentucky, Ohio and Indiana

April 2002

No Rose Garden Here

■ *Future Marines of Indiana experience "Life in the field"*

*Story and photos
by Sgt. Jim Goodwin*

WHITEMILLS, Ky.—“If it ain’t rainin’, we ain’t trainin’”—a motto many Marines live by when “toughing” out training in less than ideal weather conditions.

For the poolees of Recruiting Substation Clarksville, In., working in less than ideal weather conditions meant spending two-days conducting field-training operations in the cold, rainy and muddy grounds of central Kentucky March 9-10 during a monthly pool function.

The intent of the two-day evolution was to give the future Marines of RSS Clarksville a taste of life “in the field,” similar to what they’ll undergo during their 13 weeks of training at Marine Corps Recruit Training Depot Parris



Sgt. Lorenzo Araballo, recruiter, and Cpl. Chad Hallman, a Marine reservist, lead poolees of RSS Clarksville on a five-mile humplinfantry patrol. Poolees spent two days in the field learning the in's and out's of "life in the field."

Island, S.C., according to Sgt. James Morgan, noncommissioned officer in charge of RSS Clarksville.

From classes on applying camouflage face paint to properly building a fighting position and conducting infantry patrols, poolees were schooled in a variety of subjects, all of which they’ll be expected to learn and perform while at recruit training.

As for the rainy, below-freezing weather, that just made the weekend all the more challenging, according to Hanover, In., native Scott Gross, who shipped for recruit training at the end of last month.

“When I first heard about it [field meet], I was like, ‘Oh man, I really don’t feel like going out in the cold.’ But once I started doing it, it wasn’t to bad at all,” said Gross, who’ll train in Explosive

Ordinance Disposal following graduation from recruit training.

Morgan and his three canvassing recruiters chose to conduct mostly infantry-style training during the field meet not only to relate what the poolees would learn at Parris Island, but also to present a bit of a mental and physical challenge as well.

“If your poolees show up to something like this, they’re less likely to back out when it comes time to go to boot camp,” said Morgan.

“A lot of times they’ve [poolees] been sheltered, and we’re out here to show them what being a Marine really is,” said Sgt. Lorenzo Araballo, recruiter.

Following a full day and night of

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See FIELD, page 3

FIELD, from page 1

patrols, digging fighting trenches and conducting classes, the poolees woke up bright and early to conduct a physical fitness test.

While such training may not sound very appealing to some people, for 18-year-old Cliff Anderson, his experience with RSS Clarksville was the icing on the cake on his decision to enlist.

"This stuff just makes you stronger," said Anderson, who enlisted less than two weeks following the event.

"Once you get that intensity inside of you, you're up for anything, and you just want to do it and keep going," added Gross.

Anderson and Gross are like many of the young men and women who enlist in the Marine Corps: they expect to obtain certain qualities during recruit training, such as self-discipline and pride of belonging.

"I expect that I'll feel like I really belong to something, and I've never felt like that before," said Gross.

Teamwork is perhaps the most single important value recruits learn at recruit training. Recruits must use teamwork to



(Above) Sgt. Jason Abel and Sgt. John Tiller, recruiters, load packs into a van before heading out to White Mills, Ky., where the rain did not stop falling for the entire first day of the field meet.



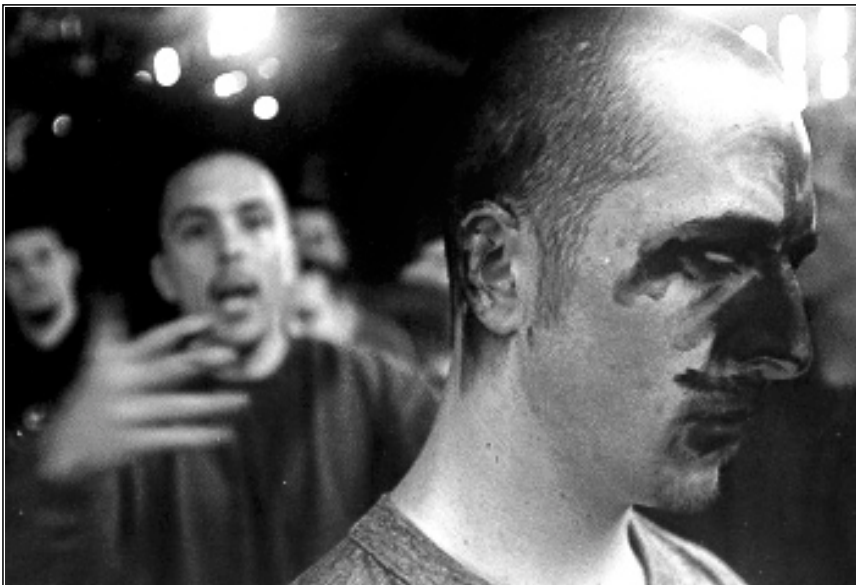
See FIELD, page 4/5

"It's more than a trial by fire" - (Right)

Poolees had to setup their own tents and shelter halves, under supervision of the Marines, before beginning training. Due to the "mud factor," poolees and their guests had to use teamwork to establish their living quarters for the two-day evolution.

(Above, middle) Poolee Brad Hobdon makes his way back to camp through the mud with fresh fire wood.





(Above) Sgt. Jason Abel uses poolee Scott Gross to explain to poolees how to properly apply camouflage face paint. (Right) Gross, acting as "A" team leader, gives silent orders to two team members during the Egg War portion of the field meet. Poolees were divided into two teams, one taking the offensive and the other defending a perimeter, to practice what they had been taught by the recruiters on basic infantry tactics.



(Above) Sgt. Abel briefs poolees on what to expect during their five-mile infantry patrol. (Left) Pvt. Erik Rosen digs in to an MRE (Meal, Ready to Eat) - the standard cuisine for Marines during field operations. Poolees had a chance to "sample" MRE's as well.



Pvt. Erik Benningfield assists a poolee with his A.L.I.C.E. pack prior to the 5-mile hump.



Cold, wet and exhausted, poolee Steven Sherons tries to keep warm by the dwindling fire on Sunday morning after a long, rainy first day and night of infantry patrolling and constructing a fighting position.

FIELD, from page 2

complete the Crucible – the defining moment during boot camp that requires them to complete obstacles and solve problems as a team in a 54-hour period without the benefits of adequate sleep and food.

"That's what we want them to know before they get to boot camp – how to work as a team," said Araballo.

Cold and nearly exhausted, the poolees of RSS Clarksville were faced with a final challenge before they could pack up and call it a weekend. Before they could head home, the poolees were divided into two squads – one on a defensive position, the other an offensive - to conduct a mock combat maneuver using soft-boiled eggs as ammunition.

Their objective: to use teamwork and practice what they had been taught by the recruiters to avoid being pelted with eggs.

At the blow of a whistle, the exercise ends. Gross, who led squad "A," is told his team is victorious. His squad is given a choice for an award for their performance: a free lunch at a restaurant of their choice or another weekend of training in the field.

The decision was unanimous: back to the field.

"Teaching them the hand and arm signals, how to patrol; it gives them the teamwork skills they need to be successful," said Araballo. "Most of these kids have never seen one another before, and if you look at them now, they're functioning as a team."



(Above) Sgt. Araballo demonstrates the hand and arm signal for "halt." Poolees were given several field survival and operations classes during the field meet.